

QLDC Council
3 June 2021

Report for Agenda Item | Rīpoata moto e Rāraki take: 5

Department: Finance, Legal & Regulatory

Title | Taitara Animal Control Fees 2021/22

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT | TE TAKE MŌ TE PŪRONGO

The purpose of this report is to set Animal Control fees in accordance with Section 37 of the Dog Control Act which allows Council to set fees by way of resolution.

RECOMMENDATION | NGĀ TŪTOHUNGA

That Council:

1. **Note** the contents of this report;
2. **Approve** the proposed fees [outlined in attachment A] in accordance with Section 37 of the Dog Control Act which allows Council to set fees by way of resolution, commencing 1 July 2021

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19/05/2021

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CONTEXT | HOROPAKI

- 1 Section 37 of the Dog Control Act allows Council to set fees by way of resolution.
- 2 Animal Control deals primarily with the control of dogs in the district. The Revenue and Finance Policy stipulates that Animal Control fees should be split 70% private and 30% publicly financed.
- 3 QLDC provides a service and it budgets that service based on user fees and compliance. Due to increased inflation and higher levels of compliance, QLDC needs to make an adjustment to the user fees to align with the agreed split in the Revenue and Finance Policy to maintain agreed levels of service.
- 4 It is not proposed to change the overall structure of the fee schedule as it promotes a high level of compliance and control of dogs within the district.

ANALYSIS AND ADVICE | TATĀRITANGA ME NGĀ TOHUTOHU

- 5 The only increase to the Animal Control fees will be in dog registration.
- 6 The existing fee structure allows for a reduction in fees for having a neutered dog, a fenced property and a dog with positive history with QLDC.
- 7 Having a neutered dog and a fenced property reduces the likelihood of roaming dogs within the community. Roaming dogs can frighten, intimidate or annoy others, in addition to fouling and attacking other animals and people.
- 8 There has been an increase in compliance and control by dog owners in the last four years and relative to the number of dogs registered in the district, the occurrence of roaming dogs is less. In 2016/2017 QLDC had 4485 dogs registered and 548 (12.2%) roaming dogs were reported to Council; in 2019/2020 there were 5388 dogs registered and only 506 (9.4%) roaming dogs reported to Council. When a dog is found to be roaming, they lose their positive history with QLDC and pay a higher registration fee.
- 9 Fewer roaming dogs in the district has a positive effect in other areas, for example the number of impounds and infringements issued. With fewer dogs roaming Council has more dogs in the lower fee category of positive history. Whilst this is pleasing to see by the Animal Control team, it does reduce the fees received to cover the Animal Control service.
- 10 There has historically been a 5% increase of dogs registered each year, although there was an increase of 7% in 2019/20. QLDC expects the number of dogs in each fee category will increase relative to the overall increase in dogs in the district in 2021/2022.
- 11 With an expected increase of dogs of between 5% and 7% in our district, an increase of \$10 per registration in each fee category is required to meet the cost recovery targets in the Revenue and Finance Policy of 70% user pays:

- a. 54% of all dogs in the district fall under the de-sexed, pet, fenced, positive fee category and will be charged **\$65** under the proposed Animal Control Registration Fees in 2021/22;
 - b. 20.9 % of all dogs in the district fall under the pet, fenced, positive fee category and will be charged **\$85** under the proposed Animal Control Registration Fees 2021/22;
 - c. 9.6% of all dogs in the district fall under working, pet, fenced fee category and will be charged **\$40** under the proposed Animal Control Registration Fees 2021/22.
- 12 The proposed fee increase will align with a number of other councils' fees for Dog Registration.
- 13 Option 1 Accept the proposed changes to the Animal Control Fees for 2021/22
- Advantages:*
- 14 The registration fees will align with the Revenue and Finance Policy.
 - 15 2021/ 2022 budgets will be met.
 - 16 No additional cost to ratepayers.
- Disadvantages:*
- 17 There will be an increase in dog registration fees, which may not be popular with some dog owners.
- 18 Option 2 Keep the current Animal Control Fees
- Advantages:*
- 19 There will be no increased cost to dog owners.
- Disadvantages:*
- 20 The Revenue and Finance Policy will not be met.
 - 21 Animal Control service will need to be reduced to meet the lower budget.
 - 22 There will be additional costs to ratepayers if the budget is overspent.

CONSULTATION PROCESS | HĀTEPE MATAPAKI:

> SIGNIFICANCE AND ENGAGEMENT | TE WHAKAMAHI I KĀ WHAKAARO HIRAKA

- 23 This matter is of low significance, as determined by reference to the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy because there is minimal impact on the environment, culture and people of the district and there is no impact on the objectives set out in the Financial Strategy, Ten Year Plan and Annual Plan. Section 37 of the Dog Control Act allows Council to set fees by way of resolution.

- 24 The persons who are affected by or interested in this matter are dog owners and ratepayers.
- 25 It is considered that dog owners would have an interest in ensuring that dog registration fees are kept as low as possible. However, ratepayers will have an interest in ensuring that services used only by dog owners are not funded by general rates. For this reason, it is considered that the Council is aware of the general views in the community, and given the low significance of the matter, consultation is not required (in accordance with sections 78 and 79 of the Local Government Act 2002. Nonetheless, the proposed fees were presented to the community in the 10 Year Plan consultation.
- 26 The review of fees and charges was signalled in the consultation dDocument for the 10 Year Plan. Most submissions were in favour of increasing fees as opposed to rates funding. The assumption in the draft budgets is that these fees will increase.

> MĀORI CONSULTATION | IWI RŪNANGA

- 27 The Council has not engaged with local Iwi due to the low significance.

RISK AND MITIGATIONS | NGĀ RARU TŪPONO ME NGĀ WHAKAMAURUTANGA

- 28 This matter relates to the financial risk category. It is associated with RISK00025 within the QLDC Risk Register. This risk has been assessed as having a moderate inherent risk rating.
- 29 The approval of the recommended option will support the Council by allowing QLDC to implement additional controls for this risk. This shall be achieved by increasing the fees to align with the Revenue and Finance Policy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS | NGĀ RITENGA Ā-PŪTEA

- 30 Increasing the fees will ensure that the Revenue and Finance Policy is met together with the Annual Plan and Long Term Plan for Animal Control services.

COUNCIL EFFECTS AND VIEWS | NGĀ WHAKAAWEAWE ME NGĀ TIROHANGA A TE KAUNIHERA

- 31 The following Council policies, strategies and bylaws were considered:
- Reference alignment with and consideration of the principles of the Vision Beyond 2050: <https://www.qldc.govt.nz/vision-beyond-2050/>
 - Dog control Bylaw 2020
 - Dog Control Policy 2020
 - Revenue and Finance policy
- 32 The recommended option is consistent with the principles set out in the named policies.
- 33 This matter is included in the Ten Year Plan/Annual Plan
- Bylaw Enforcement

The Animal Control service includes responding to complaints of wandering dogs, stock on roads, barking dogs, lost and found services, registration information, patrolling and education programmes. This ensures residents are safe, whilst the welfare of animals is protected.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS AND STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES | KA TURE WHAIWHAKAARO, ME KĀ TAKOHAKA WAETURE

34 The Queenstown Lakes District Council legal team has reviewed this report and the associated attachments.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2002 PURPOSE PROVISIONS | TE WHAKATURETURE 2002 O TE KĀWANATAKA Ā-KĀIKA

35 The recommended option:

- Will help meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses by ensuring the Revenue and Finance Policy Split of payments between Private and Public is achieved.
- Can be implemented through current funding under the Ten Year Plan and Annual Plan;
- Is consistent with the Council's plans and policies; and
- Would not alter significantly the intended level of service provision for any significant activity undertaken by or on behalf of the Council, or transfer the ownership or control of a strategic asset to or from the Council.

ATTACHMENTS | NGĀ TĀPIRIHANGA

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|---|----------------------------------------------------------|
| A | Current and proposed dog registration fees |
| B | Comparison between QLDC proposed fees and other councils |